THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) to (e) Air fares are not being regulated by the Government. Airlines are free to charge air fares as per the market forces. They however, have to comply with the route dispersal guidelines prescribed by the Government.

Problem due to heavy passenger flow at airports

335. DR. K. MALAISAMY: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that all the major airports in the country have become crowded, congested and unhealthy and there is dearth of basic facilities there;

(b) whether there is any crash plan of action to tide over this problem which has arisen due to heavy flow of passengers; and

(c) how long the crisis management will take to manage the critical situations?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) to (c) The unprecedented growth in civil aviation sector has thrown up challenges for airport infrastructure, specially at busy airports like Delhi and Mumbai airports. The infrastructure upgradation at airports is a continuous process. Delhi and Mumbai airports are restructured and being expanded and modernized through public private participation (PPP). New greenfield airports have been recently commissioned at Hyderabad and Bangalore. AAI has already undertaken upgradation of 35 Non Metro Airports in a time bound manner. In addition, 13 additional Non Metro Airports are also being developed. These airports are being upgraded in a time bound manner.

Expansion of Chennai airport

336. DR. K. MALAISAMY: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) the reasons for delay in expansion at Chennai International Airport while many of the major Metro City International Airports in India have seen or are having airport expansion;

(b) the various major areas of expansion at Chennai; and

(c) whether there would be an all out effort for quick execution of the Project within a time-frame at every stage of expansion after having delayed the Project quite long?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) to (c) Government has, in August, 2008, approved the modernisation/expansion of Chennai airport by Airports Authority of India (AAI) at an estimated cost of Rs. 1808 crores from its own resources. The work of the project has been awarded in September, 2008.

The salient features of the project are: extension and upgradation of the secondary runway, construction of a new domestic terminal, extension of existing international terminal, construction of parallel taxiway, augmentation of apron capacity, additional parking bays etc.

The project is expected to be completed in about 26 months.